SEMI-MONTHLY.

VOL. XXIV. OCTOBER 1, 1903. No. 19

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LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

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ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER AT ALLEGHENY, PA., POST OFFICE.

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CHANGE OF BRITISH BRANCH ADDRESS.

We call special attention of our British friends to the new location of our London office, noted above--24 Eversholt St., N.W. Eversholt St. is a continuation of Seymour St., which runs alongside Euston Station. The new location is four minutes' walk from Euston Station. All will be glad to know

that the increasing importance of the British work rendered the change desirable.

PLENTY OF VOLUNTEER LITERATURE.

Friends are advised that we have plenty of the Volunteer literature for 1903 on hand, and are able to fill all your orders promptly. Great blessing has been experienced by all engaging in the service, and we have reports of considerable interest being aroused. A good supply is now on its way to Great Britain.

WATCH TOWER BINDERS.

Remember, that we have these in good supply at 50 cents each, delivery free. Each Binder will hold two years' issues, and they are very convenient for easy reference and preserving the papers from injury and soiling.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

BAPTISTS BOUND AS TRULY AS OTHERS.

WE quote from the Texas **Baptist-Herald** as follows:--

"Prof. M'Glothlin of the Louisville Seminary, in an address at Savannah on 'Ecclesiasticism,' spoke these timely words:

"'Ecclesiasticism tends constantly to increase the amount of machinery and centralize it in the hands of the clergy. Now the whole tendency of the times, among most other denominations as well as the Baptists, is to magnify the importance of the layman in the denominational life. We delight to make him moderator of our associations, our State conventions and even the Southern Baptist Convention. We are beginning to put him at the head of our denominational colleges, and the only reason he does not play even a larger part in our Church affairs is our inability to induce him to do so. There is no disposition among our preachers to usurp authority or even to retain what they have. They labor to bring forward the layman. No ecclesiasticism here.

"'But what of the increase in machinery? Here we have a different tale to tell. **The early churches were the only Christian organizations so far as we know. They were wholly independent of each other,** having no connection except that which comes through unity in faith and practice. The same **was** true of the Baptist churches in America for nearly a century. The first Baptist Church in America was founded in 1639 and the first Association in 1707. The movement to organize the churches into associations met with determined opposition, but the work progressed, and by the beginning of the 19th century there were few churches which still stood outside the associations. The chief motives to these organizations had been the desire to better resist the State churches, to secure doctrinal agreement and to prosecute local missionary work.

"'With the 19th century came the great foreign mission movement and with it

the need of larger organizations. In 1814 the first national organization, the present Missionary Union, was formed. Later two other national organizations, the Home Mission Society and the American Baptist Publication Society, were organized. As a result of this same movement, combined with the great educational movement, State organizations began to be formed about 1820. The present Baptist organization was completed by the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845. **All, or nearly all, these organizations met with the most determined opposition on the ground that they were not scriptural** and endangered or destroyed the independence of the churches. It is not strange that there was fear. Never in the history of Christianity was there such rapid progress in organization as in the 138 years from 1707 to 1845. Baptists have existed in the United States for about 264 years, and it must be admitted that we have far more ecclesiastical machinery than the Christians had 264 years after the death of Christ. Out of the simple Baptist Church at Rome has grown the great Roman Catholic Church which encloses the world in its embrace! **Are we on the same road? We have gone at a very rapid pace so far; will we stop, or will the organizations go on increasing?** We have rapidly increased our organizations, but two things are to be observed which make the situation less serious than it at first appears. Before the year 294 A.D., infant baptism had been introduced and the churches had been greatly corrupted; and in the second place the local Church had lost its significance and independence. We Baptists, with all our increase of machinery, have stood true to the apostolic conception of an independent Church of regenerate people. The New Testament ideal is our ideal. And herein is our safety for the future.'"

* * *

We cannot agree with the editor of the **Baptist-Herald** that these words are **timely.** They are quite behind time. Our dear Baptist friends have already lost

their **liberty** in ecclesiasticism. For all practical purposes they are now bound as much as the people of other denominations, but they do not realize it and love their chains. Is it asked, How so? We reply that the bondage came through the error of ministerial

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ordination. Instead of recognizing, as we do, that "all ye are brethren," and that all anointed with the holy Spirit are anointed to preach,--each to the extent of his talents and opportunities,--Baptists recognized, as additionally necessary, a human ordination. The preachers took this into their own hands, implying that the Church was competent to express God's will in selecting its own pastor, but as "brethren" were so inferior that their commission or appointment or recognition of him would not do without a clerical sanction or ordination.

This **key** in the hands of Baptist ministers has made them the masters and lords of the Baptist Church,--much to its injury. Under their Ministerial associations numerous independent congregations, such as the apostles organized, have been welded into a denomination which these ministers control--creed and all. How so? Because any Church not a member of the Association would have no standing as a Baptist Church. And if a member of the Association, it can have no one for its minister unless the other ministers accept him. Hence, pastors must be chosen from the ministerial clique and must be acceptable personally and doctrinally to the other Baptist ministers.

The preachers, having all the vital power and authority, can, therefore, well afford to push forward their inferiors, the **"laymen,"** to committees, chairmanships, etc. The preachers only reinforce their own power by securing the loyalty of the leading men of the denomination, financial and otherwise, at so cheap a price. Evidently the writer scents danger in the future, but just as

evidently he rejoices in the Baptist bondage and hugs her chains as very precious. Baptist liberty is an empty boast--as meaningless and untrue as that other claim, that the early Church sailed under the name Baptist. The Church founded by our Lord and the apostles took no sectarian name. Baptists, as well as others, need to heed the Master's final command of `Revelation 18:4`.

ZIONISTS IN PERPLEXITY.

At the last Congress of the Zionists the President of the Society submitted two important communications. One was from the British Government, proffering the Society land, etc., in East Africa under favorable conditions, similar to those enjoyed by Canada --the suzerainty of Great Britain being understood. The proposition was favorably considered by a majority of the Congress and a committee of nine was appointed to examine into the feasibility of accepting the proposition. However, a goodly and influential minority stoutly opposed even the consideration of the question, declared that the Society's funds were secured with the understanding that they were for reestablishing the Jews in Palestine and not elsewhere, and that they should object to the use of a single penny in other colonization schemes, no matter how roseate. They temporarily left the Convention as a mark of their strong sentiments on the subject.

The other important communication was from the Russian Government. It distinctly avowed sympathy with the Zionist movement as originally inaugurated, because it hoped that thus Russia might be relieved of its Jewish population and the troubles, disturbances, etc., connected therewith. It, however, as distinctly disavowed sympathy with the later development of Zionism into a national or political movement; because this had a disturbing effect on Jews living in Russia and tended to make them enemies of their home

government and neighbors. The views of a Jewish writer and prominent Zionist are interesting, and follow:--

MR. ISRAEL ZANGWILL'S VIEWS.

"Viewed merely on its prosaic side, Zionism is by no means a visionary scheme. The aggregation of Jews in Palestine is only a matter of time--already they form a third of its population--and it is better that they should be aggregated there under their own laws and religion and the mild suzerainty of the Sultan than under the semi-barbarous restrictions of Russia or Roumania, and exposed to recurrent popular outbreaks. True, Palestine is a ruined country, and the Jews are a broken people. But neither is beyond recuperation. Palestine needs a people; Israel needs a country. If, in regenerating the Holy Land, Israel could regenerate itself, how could the world be other than the gainer? In the solution of the problem of Asia, which has succeeded the problem of Africa, Israel might play no insignificant part. Already the colony of Richon le Zion has obtained a gold medal for its wines from the Paris Exposition-- which is not prejudiced in the Jew's favor. We may be sure the spiritual wine of Judea would again pour forth likewise--that precious vintage which the world has drunk for so many centuries. And, as the scientific activities of the colonization societies would have paved the way for the pastoral and commercial future of Israel in its own country, so would the rabbinical sing-song in musty rooms prove to have been but the unconscious preparation of the ages for the Jerusalem university.

"But Palestine belongs to the Sultan, and the Sultan refuses to grant the coveted Judean charter, even for dangled millions. Is not this fatal? No; it matters as little as that the Zionists could not pay the millions if suddenly called upon. They have collected not two and a half million dollars. But there are millionaires enough to come to the rescue once the charter was dangled before

the Zionists. It is not likely that the Rothschilds would see themselves ousted from their familiar headship in authority and well-doing. Nor would the millions left by Baron Hirsch be altogether withheld. And the Sultan's present refusal is equally unimportant, because a national policy is

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independent of transient moods and transient rulers. The only aspect that really matters is whether Israel's face be or be not set steadily Zionward--for decades and even for centuries. Much less turns on the Sultan's mind than on Dr. Herzl's. Will he lose patience? For leaders like Dr. Herzl are not born in every century."

* * *

It will be vain for Zionists to hope to establish an **independent** government in Palestine. None of the civilized nations would favor putting the Land of Promise wholly into their control; and if they did God would not favor it. Palestine will be "trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be filled full"--viz., October, 1914, A.D. By that time the heavenly Kingdom will be in power and the ancient worthies--Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the holy prophets--will be resurrected and constitute the earthly representatives of the spiritual and invisible Kingdom of Christ and his Bride--the Gospel Church.

Then Israel will be saved from its blindness (`Rom. 11:26,27`); and God will "pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication" (`Zech. 12:10`); and this, their true conversion to the Lord and the Truth, will be the start of the world's conversion (`Rom. 11:15`), when "Many peoples shall come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of

Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths."--`Micah 4:2`.

UNEASINESS IN GERMANY.

The Kaiser has recently proposed an increase in the German army, already considered a heavy burden financially and otherwise. The press declare that there will be danger of a revolution if the matter be urged. German government bonds experienced a sharp decline immediately on the announcement.

The significance of this year's parliamentary elections in Germany cannot be fully appreciated without taking into consideration the fact that all men are not equal before the law in the Kaiser's Empire. Certain classes of voters have greater rights than others, and are permitted to cast two, three or more ballots, according to their rank or wealth. Needless to say, the privileged franchise holders are mostly adherents of the government and members of the conservative parties. The official returns showing that the Social Democrats polled 3,008,000 votes mean that they constitute more than one-half of the total number of electors in Germany, and that under a "one-man-one-vote" system they would sweep everything before them. They have gained 900,000 recruits since 1899, and their ultimate control of the Reichstag is a certainty. The Kaiser's enmity seems to help them. He will be forced to change his attitude or assume a dictatorship. He affects to treat the matter lightly, as one of chance, which may be reversed at the next election.

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1903.--GENERAL CONVENTIONS REPORT.--1903.

WE have had three splendid General Conventions this year, and each of them very successful in all respects. The first one, on April 4,5, was in the South, where the "Truth People" are much less numerous than in other quarters of our land. It was held in Atlanta, Ga., which for many reasons may be styled the principal city of those parts. The gathering of friends was estimated at 150, while the meeting advertised to the public had an estimated attendance of 450. Nineteen symbolized their consecration by water immersion. The listed speakers were Brothers Stevens and Wilbor, representatives of the Atlanta Church, Pilgrim Harrison and Pastor Russell.

The spiritual power of the Convention was great, and we trust still abides in those who attended, and extends to their home-comrades who could not attend. The sentiments of the majority, we believe, were voiced by one old brother who boarded the train on which the writer departed. Shaking our hand warmly he said, "Brother Russell, I would not take a thousand dollars for the good I have received from this Convention; --and I am only a poor man, too." He is a mountain farmer who knows well what it means to combat the thorns and thistles and to eat his bread

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by the sweat of his face; yet he prized the spiritual blessings above all compare because of such were his treasures--heavenly.

THE DENVER CONVENTION.

The second Convention, at Denver, Colo., on July 10-12, was central to a large

district not previously favored with Convention privileges. The friends in attendance were chiefly of Colorado, and from California, Nebraska, Dakota, Iowa, Kansas, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Utah, Indian Territory, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio and numbered about 350 earnest, zealous brethren and sisters, in about equal proportions. Thirty-six availed themselves of the opportunity offered and symbolized their burial into Christ's death by immersion in water.

The principal public service was attended by about 900, and it is to be hoped that our Master's name and cause were honored and blessed by the grand seasons of refreshing here enjoyed. The listed speakers were Brother Hall of the local congregation, Pilgrims Williamson, Draper, Barton, Howel and Pastor Russell. "It is good to be here," seemed the general sentiment of all in attendance. Not by any

means the least important of its sessions were the Testimony Meetings and the final Love Feast, at which many eyes were filled with tears as the company sang,

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"Blest be the tie that binds
     Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
     Is like to that above."
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All seemed to have in mind the great Convention of the future which the Apostle designates "The General Assembly and Church of the Firstborns," in which we hope to participate and which will not break up forever. What a

hope,--forever with the Lord and those who are his!

THE TORONTO CONVENTION.

The last Convention of the season has just closed at Toronto, Canada,--Sept. 5-7. We surely had a blessed season of spiritual refreshment. Many said, "This is the grandest we have ever had!" Yes! This is always the sentiment at every Convention, and it is really difficult to determine superiority when everything is so soul-satisfying and heart-uplifting. The listed speakers were Bro. Stovel of the Toronto Church and Pilgrims VanAmburgh, Hay, Harrison, McPhail, Barton, Streeter, Samson and Pastor Russell; but many others were heard from effectively in the Testimony Meetings, which continue to be amongst the most effective sessions of all Conventions.

The attendance was chiefly Canadian, and from New York, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois and Pennsylvania; the latter being the most prominent numerically. The number of "Truth people" was estimated at 800, while the attendance at the two public gatherings averaged about 1800 each--some estimating the number much higher. At the baptism service fifty-eight symbolized their burial into death with our Lord, and it surely was a solemn funeral occasion, yet one in which all rejoiced, remembering the promise, "If we be dead with him we shall also live with him." (`2 Tim. 2:11`.) The concluding session was a Love Feast long to be remembered. In some respects surely this last Convention deserves to rank chief of all Conventions thus far held under the auspices of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Central to a large population and to the homes of a large number of the interested, the attendance of the Church and the public was larger than at any previous Convention. The attraction to the people of Toronto was thorough advertising and the best public auditorium.

The generous arrangements connected with these Conventions deserves a word of appreciation. The brethren of the entertaining Churches recognized the fact that hundreds of the Lord's brethren were coming at considerable cost, and concluded that no reasonable expense should be spared to make their stay pleasant and spiritually profitable. It is safe to say that the friends of the entertaining Church spent **pro rata** as much or more time and money than did those who came to them long distances. However, all was so cheerfully and heartily done, "as unto the Lord," that they evidently shared the great blessings of the Conventions also, proportionately.

NEXT YEAR'S CONVENTIONS.

It is too early to decide upon these definitely, but as the Grand Army Encampment will secure special railroad rates to Boston, and the World's Fair will probably secure special rates to St. Louis, these two cities will probably have next year's General Conventions if the churches at each desire this arrangement.

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"CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY."

--`COLOSSIANS 1:27`.--

LANGUAGE is but a medium for the communication of thought, and words are but symbols of ideas. When words are so framed in sentences as to express an impossibility or an absurdity, when considered literally, but do forcibly illustrate a known truth when symbolically interpreted, we instinctively

recognize the figure, and are instructed by it. In this way many of the deep things of God--the spiritual things--are expressed to us, since they are often forcibly illustrated by things familiar to us on the natural plane. Thus, for instance, the resurrection, both natural and spiritual, finds an illustration in the processes of vegetation (`1 Cor. 15:35-38`); and the processes of the beginning, development and final perfecting of the spiritual sons of God find a remarkable illustration in the begetting, quickening and birth of the natural man. (`James 1:18`; `Eph. 2:1`; `John 3:3`.) But if, when we read these symbols or illustrations of spiritual things, we pervert and dishonor our God-given reason by accepting palpable absurdities as their interpretation, we deceive ourselves, and in so doing are not blameless. In parables and dark, symbolic sayings our Lord opened his mouth and taught his disciples, expecting them to use their common sense in either interpreting them themselves, or in judging of the correctness of any interpretation offered by others as they should become meat in due season. And when on one occasion, instead of using their brains to draw from it the implied lesson, the disciples asked for the interpretation

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of a parable, Jesus suggestively and reprovingly replied, "How then will ye know all parables?" (`Mark 4:13`.) He would have us think, consider and put our God-given mental faculties to their legitimate use.

Bearing in mind these wholesome reflections, together with the fact that the Scriptures abound in these symbolic expressions of truth, let us consider the Apostle's meaning when he speaks of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." He uses the same figure again in his letter to the Galatians (`Gal. 4:19`), saying, "My children, whom I am bearing again, till Christ be formed in you," etc. Here the Apostle is likening his care and labor and endurance for those who

had been begotten by the Truth to the new nature, to the physical endurance of a mother in nourishing and sustaining the germ of human life until the new human creature is formed and able to appropriate for itself the life-sustaining elements of nature, independent of her life. So the Apostle sought to nourish and sustain those germs of spiritual being with his own spiritual life until, apart from his personal work and influence, they would be able to appropriate for themselves the God-given elements of spiritual life contained in the Word of Truth;--until the Christ-character should be definitely formed in them.

In no other reasonable sense could the Apostle bear those Galatian Christians; and in no other reasonable sense could Christ be formed in them, or in us. The thought is that every true child of God must have a definite individual Christian character which is not dependent for its existence upon the spiritual life of any other Christian. He must from the Word of Truth, proclaimed and exemplified by other Christians, draw those principles of life, etc., which give him an established character, a spiritual individuality of his own. So positive and definite should be the spiritual individuality of every one, that, should even the beloved brother or sister whose spiritual life first nourished ours and brought us forward to completeness of character fall away (which the Apostle shows is not impossible--`Heb. 6:4-6`; `Gal. 1:8`), we would still live, being able to appropriate for ourselves the spirit of Truth.

Paul feared, and had reason to fear, that the Galatian Christians had not yet come to this condition of established character--that the Christ-life was not yet definitely formed in them. He said, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain" (`Gal. 4:11`); for already they were giving heed to seducing teachers and departing from the faith, showing that they were not established in the Truth, and consequently not established in the spirit of the Truth, which is the spirit of Christ, and, hence, that Christ was not yet formed in them.-- `Verse 19`.

Alas, how often we see among those who bear the name of Christ, and who have truly received the spirit of adoption as sons of God, that Christ is not yet formed in them! that they have not yet reached that degree of development which manifests a distinct spiritual individuality! They depend largely upon the spiritual life of others, and if their spiritual life declines these dependent ones suffer a similar decline; if they go into error, these follow, as did many

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of those Galatian Christians to whom Paul wrote. How is it, beloved, in your several cases? Apply the question to yourselves--Is Christ formed in you so fully that none of these things move you? that, however they may grieve you at heart, they cannot affect your spiritual life? This is what it is to have "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

A cloak of mystery and superstition has been thrown around this expression of the Apostle, evidently by the great Adversary of the Truth and the Church, to the effect that in some secret way, known only to the initiated, Christ personally comes into the consecrated soul and uses that soul simply as a machine; and that, consequently, the machine is about infallible, because Christ is using it; that for them to speak, or think, or act, or interpret the Scriptures, is for Christ to do it, in whose hands they are merely the passive agents. With this idea they generally go further, and claim that Christ personally talks with them and teaches them independently of his Word; and some go so far as to claim that they have visions and special revelations from the Lord. Some speak of this presence as Christ; some as the holy Spirit; and some speak of them interchangeably.

While there is a semblance of truth in all this, and while we remember that

Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them...shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him;...and we will come unto him and make our abode with him" (`John 14:21,23`), it is true that a more serious error could scarcely be entertained than this idea of personal infallibility because of the supposed mysterious presence of another being within.

Notice that this promise of the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is to those who **have** and **keep** the commandments of the Lord Jesus. Those, therefore, who ignore the Word of the Lord and have not his commandments--who do not know what they are, and hence cannot keep them, but who hearken to the voice of their own imaginations and note all the changing states of their own feelings, mistaking them for the voice of the Lord and follow the impressions

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arising from this source, instead of the commandments or teachings of the Lord--are quite mistaken in claiming this promise. Under their delusion they are following another spirit than the spirit of Truth; and unless recovered from the snare they must inevitably plunge deeper and deeper into superstition and error.

The first difficulty we meet in attempting to dispel this delusion from the midst of those infatuated with it, is the claim that this is a higher attainment in the spiritual life, up to which we have not yet measured. If the testimony of the Scriptures bearing on the subject is brought forward they say, "Oh, I see you have the head-knowledge, but you have not the Spirit, you have not Christ in you." They then proceed to tell how Christ is in them, and that he is "teaching them wonderful things," which we shortly discover to be quite out of harmony

with the Word of God. The case is indeed a sad one when all Scripture testimony contrary to their belief is set aside with claims of superior revelations of Christ or the holy Spirit which other children of God do not enjoy, and that Christ personally dwells in them, etc., etc.

Who but these deceived ones cannot see that, if their theory be true--if God talks with them and answers all their queries aside from his written Word, the Bible, through mental inspiration, or by dreams, or by audible sound--then the Bible is to such a useless book, and time spent in its study is so much time wasted. Who would "search the Scriptures" as for hid treasures, as the Lord enjoined and as all the apostles searched, if they could shut their eyes, or kneel, and have God make a special revelation to them, respecting the information desired. Surely any sensible person would prefer a special revelation on a subject, rather than to spend days and months and years examining and comparing the words of our Lord and the apostles with those of the prophets and the Book of Revelation ("searching what or what manner of time the spirit did signify"), if they could ask and have an inspired and infallible answer in a moment. None of God's consecrated ones should be thus misled of the Adversary. It is the stepping-stone to pride and every evil work;--to **pride,** because those who are thus deceived soon feel themselves honored of God above the apostles, who even in conference judged of the mind of the Lord as read in his Word and in his providential leadings in harmony with his Word (`Acts 15:12-15`); to **every evil work,** in that those thus puffed up fancy themselves infallible, and, separated from the anchor of truth, the Bible, Satan can soon lead them rapidly into the outer darkness of the world, or into yet darker delusions.

But the testimony of the Scriptures is quite contrary to this vaunting spirit. Paul says, "Know ye not...that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" and then he exhorts that we examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, or

whether we have rejected the faith and thus become reprobates-- no longer acceptable to God. (`2 Cor. 13:5`.) Every **true** child of God has respect to the commandments of God: he searches the Scriptures that he may know them, and is not left in ignorance of them; and, learning them, he endeavors to keep them, and the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is with all such so long as they continue to hold and to keep (obey) his commandments--to hold the Truth in righteousness.

To have the Truth and to keep it is not merely to accept it on the recommendation of some friend, and because it gives some comfort and costs nothing, and to hold it until some other presumed friend dazzles the unsettled mind with some fanciful theory. The promise of the abiding presence of the Father and the Son is not to such. Christ is not in them; Christ is in the humble and sincere ones. He and the Father love and abide with them.

But how? To illustrate--a friend accompanying another to a railway station said, as he was about to board the train, "Remember, I will be with you all the way." He meant that his thoughts would be with his friend and that he would be concerned for his welfare, etc. In a similar, and yet in a fuller and broader sense, the Lord is ever present with his people. He is always thinking of us, looking out for our interests, guarding us in danger, providing for us in temporal and spiritual things, reading our hearts, marking every impulse of loving devotion to him, shaping the influences around us for our discipline and refining, and hearkening to our faintest call for aid or sympathy or fellowship with him. He is never for a moment off guard, whether we call to him in the busy noon hours or in the silent watches of the night. And not only is the Lord Jesus thus present, but the Father also. How blessed the realization of such abiding faithfulness! And no real child of God is devoid of this evidence of his adoption. Sometimes it is more manifest than at others; as, for instance, when some special trial of faith or patience or endurance necessitates the special call

for special help, and forthwith comes the grace sufficient with a precious realization of its loving source. Thus

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"E'en sorrow, touched by heaven, grows bright,
     With more than rapture's ray,
As darkness shows us worlds of light
     We never saw by day."
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Every true child of God has these precious evidences of sonship, and the roughest places in his pathway are so illuminated with divine grace that they

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become the brightest, and memory continues to refer to them with thankfulness; and faith and hope and love grow strong and inspiring.

Our Lord always links the progress and development of our spiritual life with our receiving and obeying the Truth, and every child of God should beware of that teaching which claims to be in advance of the Word, and that Christ or the holy Spirit speaks to such advanced Christians independently of the Word. The snare is a most dangerous one. It cultivates spiritual pride and boastfulness, and renders powerless the warnings and expostulations of the sacred Scriptures because the deluded ones think they have a higher teacher dwelling in them. And Satan, taking advantage of the delusion, leads them captive at his will.

These symbolic expressions of the Scriptures must be interpreted as symbols, and to force any unreasonable interpretation upon them manifests a culpable wilfulness in disregarding the divinely appointed laws of our mind, and the result is self-deception. When we read, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in

God, and God in him" (`1 Jno. 4:16`), the only reasonable interpretation is that we dwell in the love and favor, and in the spirit or disposition of God; and that his spirit or disposition dwells in us. Thus God by his indwelling spirit works in us to will and to do his good pleasure (`Phil. 2:13`); and we are reckoned as not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in us.--`Rom. 8:8,9`.

Let us endeavor to have more and more of the mind, the Spirit of God--to have his Word abide in us richly (`John 15:7`; `Col. 3:16`)--to have and to keep his commandments, that the abiding presence of the Father and the Son may be with us; and that, realizing that the Christ-character and life are definitely formed in us, the hope of glory may be ours; for our Lord said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (`Matt. 7:21`.) How careful then should we be in

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seeking both to know and to do the will of God. Many indeed will come forth with the plea of their wonderful works, hoping to be admitted into the Kingdom, but only those will be recognized who have done the will of the Lord, and who have no theories or works of their own whereof to boast.

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A PROPER SEEKING OF DIVINE FAVOR.

--`2 SAM. 6:1-12`.--OCTOBER 4.--

"Blessed are they that dwell in thy house."--`Psa. 84:4`.

AFTER David had been voluntarily chosen king of all the tribes of Israel, not as a result of his conquest, but as a result of his patient waiting for the Lord's time to put him into the position of king, he took possession of Jerusalem and made it the capital city of the kingdom. Then followed wars with the Philistines, who again sought to invade the land of Israel. In these wars, under the Lord's blessing, the Israelites were successful. It was after seven years had passed under such conditions--after the kingdom of Israel had become quite settled, and was not likely to be molested by enemies--that the scene of this lesson opens. King David, at this time about forty-four years of age, recognized the fact that religious matters had been at a low ebb in the nation for many years, and that the Lord having now blessed them by reuniting them and giving them peace, an appropriate time had come to do what he could in the way of reviving the religious sentiments of the people. His own heart ever loyal to the Lord, he desired that others should more fully appreciate the Lord as their light and their salvation. So it is with all who truly reverence the Lord and trust in him; they are desirous of telling their joys abroad, and helping others into the same condition of peace and rest in the Lord.

The Ark of the Covenant, it will be remembered, was the chief article of furniture in the Tabernacle service which the Lord instituted at the hand of Moses in the wilderness. We have no certain knowledge of the regularity of the Tabernacle worship during the period from Joshua to date. Quite probably the services were maintained with more or less regularity. It is possible that since the Ark was the chief center of interest in connection with that service, its movements, etc., may have included the movement of the other articles of furniture of the Tabernacle, its boards, curtains, lamp, table, altars, etc.

Shortly after Israel entered Palestine Joshua located the Ark at Shiloh, twenty miles north of Jerusalem. (`Josh. 18:1`.) That it was still there at the close of the period of the Judges, and while Samuel lived with Eli, is shown by `1 Sam. 1:3`. The sons of Eli took the Ark with them into battle against the Philistines, thus evidencing their faith in the divine institutions, although their lives were corrupt; but as a result of this misuse of the Ark, the Lord permitted it to be captured by the Philistines. However, while they possessed it a curse seemed to accompany it. In the temple of their god, Dagon, his image fell down before the Ark, and the people of the cities in which it was located were afflicted with plagues. The Philistines were glad to get rid of the Ark, and loading it upon a cart

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started the oxen in the direction of the Israelites. From the time of its return the Ark was in the custody of Abinadab, the priest, and his sons, one of whom was Uzzah. The Ark had thus been with the house of Abinadab in the hill Gibeah and Kirjath-jearim, otherwise called Baale, seventy years.

Any religious movement amongst the Jews must necessarily center in and about the Ark of the Covenant, for it was the symbol of the Lord's presence and of his mercy and grace toward them as a people. We remember that when in its place in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle a bright light, called the Shekinah glory, represented the Lord's presence between the two Cherubim of its golden lid, which lid was called the Mercy Seat, because upon it the blood of atonement was sprinkled each year, which covered the sins of that people for a year, and was repeated year by year continually, as a foreshadowing type of the blood of Christ, by which the real atonement is made. In the box under this lid or Mercy Seat was the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded and the two Tables of the Law, symbolizing the gracious arrangements and promises of

the Almighty to his people. Spiritual Israel, thank God, has inherited the realities which were thus typified. Christ is the Ark of the Covenant. In him the Law has full satisfaction. In him is vested the priestly office, represented by Aaron's rod, and in him is provided the heavenly manna. All these things are made ours by the Mercy Seat, and we have access to and are accepted before the Mercy Seat as members of the High Priest's body, by virtue of the blood of atonement shed by our Redeemer as a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

King David realized that the Ark of the Lord, representing his presence, should be in the capital city of the nation, making it the city of the great King, and directing the minds of Israel, not only to their earthly king and his laws and regulations, but through him to the heavenly King whom he represented. To have this event notable--to arouse the religious sentiments of the whole people--the king realized that they must all to some extent participate in the movement, and hence he gathered from all quarters thirty thousand of the chief men of the nation--not only its military representatives, but the heads of the tribes. There is a good lesson here for all spiritual Israelites who have any prominence in the carrying forward of religious work. It is not sufficient that a leader, a representative, shall attempt some prominent service for the Lord and for the Truth. It is wiser, better every way, that all of the Lord's people be invited to join directly or representatively in any prominent matter connected with the Lord's service. Even in the affairs of a small congregation it will be found disadvantageous to have one person do all the speaking, all the leading, all the serving. Far better, far wiser is it, far more in harmony with the Scriptural direction, that each should endeavor to take a part in the service, and be encouraged so to do along the lines of his natural talents and in proportion as he shall be found humble, faithful and helpful.

The holy joy and rejoicing of the journey with the Ark from Kirjath-jearim

toward Jerusalem was suddenly interrupted by the jolting of the cart, which Uzzah, who had it in charge, feared would overthrow it. When he put forth his hand to steady the Ark he was smitten dead for his error. Consternation took the place of rejoicing. The thirty thousand who had come together specially to honor the Lord, and David himself also, were alarmed. Fear fell upon all, and David at once determined that this was either a mark of divine disfavor concerning the bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem, or that increasingly disastrous experiences might come to him and to the city by reason of the presence of the Ark. All were in fear, and the question now was, what to do with the holy oracle. A courageous man of the tribe of Levi, Obed-edom, was willing to receive the emblem of the Lord Jehovah's presence into his premises--probably the Ark was set up with the Tabernacle, etc., in his yard or court or appropriate place.

"David was displeased because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah"--not displeased with the Lord, we may be sure, from what we know of the man, for David's reverence for the Lord and his confidence in his righteous dealings are clearly manifest in all of his writings. We may properly understand this to mean, then, that David was displeased with his former determination --to take the Ark to Jerusalem; displeased that his good intentions respecting the revival of religion and the honoring of the lord had thus gone astray through a lack of particularity on his own part and on the part of the priests who had charge of the movement, in that they did not obey the direct and explicit instructions of the Lord concerning the manner in which this sacred emblem of his presence should be moved. See `Num. 4:15`; `7:9`, where it is specified that the Ark was to be carried upon the shoulders of the Levites by poles running through certain rings arranged for the purpose. That this was David's attitude of mind is evident upon the reading of the ninth verse: "David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, How shall the Ark of the Lord come to me?" We can imagine the disappointment and chagrin, not only of David, but also of the thirty thousand

representative Israelites, when they scattered to their homes, disappointed respecting their good intentions, which apparently had not been fully approved by the Lord.

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The statement that "the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah" is not to be understood to signify violent passion on the Lord's part, but evidently is an accommodated expression to bring down to human comprehension the fact that the Lord was displeased with the action of Uzzah, and thought proper to punish him for his neglect. Quite possibly long association with the Ark had bred in Uzzah a familiarity and loss of respect for it as representative of God; and his open violation of the divine regulation on the highway, and in the sight of the representatives of all Israel, would have brought the divine commands and threatenings respecting the Ark and the various holy things of the Tabernacle into disrespect. The Lord resented this in the interest of his people, and incidentally took the opportunity to teach all Israel, through their representatives there assembled, a great lesson on

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the propriety of reverence for the Lord and for the particularities of his commands.

The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Whoever has not learned this primary lesson in reverence has not made a proper start in his worship and service. Unless he learns this lesson he is not likely to accomplish anything that will be pleasing to the Lord--he is apt to be a stumbling-block, rather than an assistance in the Lord's service. Indeed, those who are the Lord's consecrated people, and who have been privileged to handle holy things, and to

enter into the Most Holy by the blood of Jesus, approaching the throne of the heavenly grace in prayer, have continual need to remember the appropriateness of reverence as they approach the Lord or engage in any service for him. All such should learn from this lesson how they touch holy things, and to do so according to the divine direction and not otherwise. The poet has noticed this tendency of some to "rush in where angels fear to tread." Such irreverence sometimes manifests itself conspicuously in prayer, where the one who should be a worshiper, overflowing with thanksgiving for mercies received, undertakes to give direction to the great King of kings concerning the management of his work far and near and in all particulars. The Lord does not smite down such today, and make public examples of them for their irreverence, but we may be sure that, as the Apostle says, such petitions will receive no consideration of the Lord. (`James 1:7`.) A lesson in this matter to us is that obedience is better than sacrifice. The carrying of the Ark upon the shoulders of the four Levites might not have been as majestic a procedure as the one attempted with the cart; it would nevertheless have been more pleasing to the Lord, because it was according to his directions. Let us apply this lesson carefully, and see to it that we not only desire to do the Lord's will, but that we so desire to do it in his way that we will give close attention thereto, hearkening to the statements of his Word, or, as the prophet expresses it, let us be amongst those who tremble at his Word--who are extremely careful to note and particularly follow the Word of the Lord in every matter. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I come to make up my jewels."

To those who discern the Scriptural teaching that death is the cessation of life, and not an entrance into life more abundant, there will be no need to explain that Uzzah's conduct not only justified the Lord in making him an example before the nation, instructing the whole people in reverence, but also that no injury was done to Uzzah's eternal future. He lived before the redemption price had been paid, and before any door to eternal life had been opened. He was one

member of the human family for which Christ Jesus our Lord gave his life a ransom. As a consequence, he will be one member of the human family who shall ultimately hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth from the sleep of death--to have it testified to him, in that his "due time," that God has been gracious to our entire race, and has redeemed us with the precious blood. (`1 Tim. 2:4-6`.) It is to those who have gotten the mistaken idea which ignores the resurrection and claims that there are no dead to be resurrected, but that the dead are more alive than they ever were before, and who, therefore, think of Uzzah as being dropped immediately into the hands of devils for eternal torture--it is to these that this narrative seems perplexing and unjustly severe. Thank God for the clearer light now shining upon his character and plan!

During the three months that the Ark was at the home of Obed-edom the Lord's blessing was specially with the family, to such a degree that their neighbors took knowledge of it, and the matter eventually reached the attention of the king. We think it not unreasonable to assume that there was something in the character of Obed-edom, and the conduct of his home, in his reverence of the Lord and his confidence in him, that had to do with the blessing accompanying the possession of the Ark; because we have no record of any special blessing coming to the house of Abinadab during the seventy years that the Ark remained there. We might draw a lesson from this applicable to spiritual Israel. The Bible in some respects represents the Lord to us, as the Ark represented him to natural Israel. To it we go for the settlement of our questions. From it we hear the message of the Lord speaking peace to our souls, the forgiveness of sins, etc. The Bible has been in many homes in Christendom for more than seventy years without bringing any special blessing to those homes; yet to some, even in a few months, it

has brought inestimable favors. What is the difference? We reply that very much depends upon the genuineness of the Israelite and the degree of reverence he has for the Lord and his Word, and his carefulness to consult that Word in respect to all his affairs, and the affairs of his home. Those who have the blessing of the Lord's Word, and especially those who have any light upon its pages in this dawning of the Millennial morning, if they are not receiving great blessing from it in their own hearts, peace, joy, comfort, courage, strength, and finding such blessings also upon the members of their households, have reason to inquire to what extent they are responsible for their failure to profit thus.

Hearing of the blessing of the Lord upon the home of Obed-edom, King David took fresh courage, and realized that these different experiences of Uzzah and Obed-edom taught the lesson that those who reverently and carefully sought to know and to do the will of the Lord would have a blessing in proportion to their nearness to him, while the careless and the irreverent only need be in fear. Again the king assembled the representatives of the nation from all quarters, the chief men of the tribe and the chief representatives of the army, etc., and apparently this day of the bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem was the most joyful and the most notable day in David's entire experience. See an account of this in `1 Chron. 15`, `16`. On this occasion care was taken to follow the divine direction, and the Ark was borne on the shoulders of the Levites, frequent stoppages being made, during which sacrifices were offered to the Lord.

On the whole we discern that the Lord's dealing in this matter taught David and all Israel a great lesson, and was very advantageous to the nation as a whole. Thus it is with all the corrections in righteousness which the Lord may at any time give to those who are truly his; rightly received they will bring forth peaceable fruits of righteousness, reverence and obedience.

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KING DAVID'S REPENTANCE.

--`PSALM 51:1-17`.--OCTOBER 18.--

Golden Text.--"Create in me a clean heart, O God."

PROSPERITY did not work to King David's personal advantage. After years of phenomenal success under the Lord's blessing, when his kingdom was mighty and his name honorable, and the necessity for his personal participation in wars was passed, and his heart had begun to gravitate towards earthly pleasures and was less zealous for the Lord and the Law than at first, the king fell into very grievous sins, which appear all the more black in contrast with the high moral character shown by him in his earlier life, when he was the man after God's own heart. The story of his sins, how he became enamored of Bathsheba and committed adultery with her, and subsequently, to shield himself, caused her husband Uriah to be placed in the forefront of the battle that he might be killed by the enemy, involving the loss of several other lives as well, is told in the Scriptures in a most straightforward manner, without the slightest effort to condone the king's wrong-doing. No excuses are offered in connection with the account; the full weight of these awful crimes is laid directly on the king's head. Whatever excuses may be offered on his behalf must come from the reader of the account. We may suggest some thoughts along this line: In that day the kings of the world exercised a despotic authority, and it was a theory among the people that the king could do no wrong--that whatever he pleased to do was proper to him because of his high position as the head and ruler of the nation. We could in no sense of the word agree with such

a thought. Nevertheless we can reasonably suppose that a sentiment so general would have more or less influence upon the mind of the king. He who respected Saul's life, because he was the Lord's anointed, may have to some extent fallen into the misconception that his own anointing by the Lord relieved him in some degree from the responsibilities resting upon others of his nation.

For about two years after these crimes were committed the king sought to stifle his conscience, and to consider that he was only using kingly liberties in what he had done. Nevertheless his conscience smote him, and he felt an alienation from God and a condemnation under his law such as he would not have felt had he been of a different stamp of character. God was not hasty in reproving him, either. He allowed him to have a full taste of heart bitterness--allowed him to feel the darkness of soul, absence of joy, resulting from the cloud which had come between him and the Lord. It was at the appropriate time, after David had passed through secret mournings and travailings of the soul, that the Lord sent him a reproof through Nathan the prophet to bring the whole matter clearly before his mind. Nathan, under the figure of a parable, excited the king's sympathies and declaration of a very severe judgment--a death sentence--against the person offending, and then the Prophet brought home to him the lesson saying, "Thou art the man!"

King David, we are to remember, did not belong to the spiritual house of sons, and hence had a far less clear view of such matters than that which would properly

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belong to every member of the house of sons, begotten of the spirit and "taught of God." We are not, therefore, to expect to draw a lesson to ourselves along

similar lines. Rather we of the spiritual house, under the clearer conceptions of the divine will, are to remember the higher interpretation of adultery and murder set forth in the New Testament: that whoever desires adultery, and is merely restrained from it by outward circumstances or fears, is really an adulterer in his heart (`Matt. 5:28`); that he that is angry with his brother, he who hates his brother, is a murderer--because the spirit of anger is that which, unrestrained, would lead to murder (`Matt. 5:22`); and that the person who covets the things of another and is merely restrained from taking them for lack of opportunity or fear of consequence, is at heart a thief. If these principles be applied by the New Creation in the examination of their hearts, it is entirely probable that some of the "house of sons" today may find themselves very near the plane of King David as respects sin, and so viewing matters they will exercise proportionately greater compassion in their judgment of the royal transgressor. Such, too, will find great consolation in the Lord's compassion, provided they are exercised in respect to their offences as David was concerning his. "There is compassion with thee that thou mightest be feared," is the prophet's expression. If God were wanting in compassion, as are many of our fellow creatures, there would be nothing to hope for under such circumstances. It is when we realize that there is forgiveness with the Lord for all who are penitent at heart, and who, therefore, give evidence that their sins are not wilful, but rather of the weakness of heredity and under the pressure of blinding temptations, that we are moved to repentance by a hope for better things.

The `51st Psalm` is generally recognized as being the one in which the Psalmist expresses to God his contrition for his sins, and the fact that it is dedicated to the Chief Musician implies that it was the king's intention that it, in common with other of the Psalms, should be chanted in the Tabernacle services, for which he had set apart a large number of singers. We thus perceive that if the sin was flagrant and gross, the atonement which the king endeavored

to make was a most public one. Probably many of the nation had felt more or less of the king's condemnation, and its influence must have been very injurious; and now in his public view of it as sin, and his prayer for divine forgiveness, the king would undo so far as possible not only the injury which he had inflicted upon his own conscience, and which as a cloud hung between the Lord and him, but he would undo also the evil influences as respects the conscience of the nation--on the subjects of adultery and murder.

Here again we see why David was described as a man after God's own heart. His sins were not pleasing to God--quite the reverse; but the after appreciation of the enormity of the sins and the hearty repentance therefor to the Lord, and the desire to be cleansed from every evil way, were pleasing to the Lord. Here we have an illustration of how all things may work together for good to those who love God. By reason of his heart-loyalty to the Lord, and the principles of righteousness, even these terrible sins resulted in bringing a great blessing to David's own heart--humbling him--giving him an appreciation of his weakness and littleness, and of his need to abide close to the Lord, if he would have the Lord's fellowship and compassion and be safe from the temptations of his own fallen flesh. So, too, with the New Creation. How many of them have realized profitable lessons and blessings out of some of their stumblings--not that the stumblings were good nor of the Lord, but that the Lord was able to overrule such circumstances for good to those who are of the proper mind--rightly exercised by them to repentance and reformation.

The `first three verses of the Psalm` express David's appreciation of his sin and his trust in the Lord, without any attempt to apologize for his shortcomings. He trusted to the Lord to make whatever allowances could be made and merely appealed to his great "loving-kindness." In calling to mind the multitude of God's tender mercies in the past, he expressed faith and trust that in some way the Lord could blot out these grievous transgressions and forgive them. The

Lord had not yet clearly defined the way in which he could be just and yet be the justifier of sinners. Only vaguely through the shadows of the Day of Atonement sacrifices had he intimated that he had some way of his own by which in due time the guilty but repentant ones might be cleansed. David grasped the thought of mercy as understood in the types and shadows of the Law, and much more may we of the house of sons grasp the thought of our Father's forgiveness when we see that it is exercised towards us by the Lord Jesus Christ, who already has given himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, and whose sacrifice has been accepted of the Father,--as manifested by our Lord's resurrection from the dead, and by the descent of the holy Spirit at Pentecost. If, therefore, David could trust the Lord for loving-kindness and tender mercies and forgiveness of sins, the members of the house of sons should be able to exercise full faith in the divine character and plan of salvation from sin.

The `fourth verse` would seem to ignore the fact that wrong-doing had been done to fellow-creatures, but we may preferably understand it to mean that while this wrong to fellow-creatures was recognized by the king,

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he recognized a still higher responsibility to God, whose laws he had broken and whose kingly office, typifying that of the Christ, he had dishonored. Hence, in contrast between what man might think of his crime as against man and his own still higher consciousness of his sin as against the Lord, the latter seemed so much greater as to practically obscure the former. The greater sin as against the Almighty quite overshadows the wrongs to humanity. David declares his recognition of the fact that God is the great Judge, and that whatever his judgment would be he knew in advance that it would be right.

In the `fifth verse` he introduces an extenuating thought, as though reminding the Lord that he was born in sin and therefore that perfection was not possible for him. But he does not use this fact as a screen behind which to hide his own responsibilities. Free to will, though a sinner by nature, he was necessarily responsible for yielding as he did to temptation, but he was confident that the Lord would give him the benefit of every mitigating circumstance.

It will be noted that David expected punishment from the Lord for his sins, and was here expressing his confidence that the Lord would send no punishment which would not be reasonable and within the limits of justice. What he was praying for in this Psalm was not a remission of proper punishment, but rather for the cleansing of his heart in the sight of the Lord and for his restoration to the divine favor. As a matter of fact we find that the Lord did send a severe punishment upon the king, and that he restored the sinner to his favor, granting him to experience again the joys of his salvation. According to the sentiments of other kings of his time, evidently acquiesced in by the people of Israel, the king had taken an extremely moderate course in sin, in that he had not directly taken the life of Uriah but merely connived at his death in battle; but the king appreciated the fact that God was looking deeper than this and desired truth--righteousness in the inward parts--in the heart. Outward crime and a crime allowed in the mind are alike heinous in God's sight: his experience had taught the king wisdom. Now he wished to be thoroughly cleansed, and poetically says, "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." Hyssop was used in the sprinkling of the unclean under the Law. David, grasping to some extent the significance of the symbol, desired the antitypical cleansing of his **heart.** His appreciation of the Lord's thoroughness in dealing with sin and of his compassion in forgiveness are good lessons for some of the still more favored members of the "house of sons." Many of the latter, although having seen with "the eye of faith" the great Atonement for sins made by our Lord Jesus, are still unable to appreciate the fact that the

application of the merit of his sacrifice is quite sufficient to cleanse us from all sin and perfect us, that we may be recognized as absolutely pure in the Father's sight and dealt with accordingly--not as sinners, but as sons.

From the statement of `verse 8` we may reasonably infer that during the year that preceded this repentance King David was in so miserable a state of mind that even the music of the singers and of those who played skilfully upon the harp and all the joyous songs of Nature were sore to his heart--had no gladness in them to comfort his heart when it was barred from the Lord's presence and fellowship. This is the thought of our hymn, which says of the soul which enjoys the light of the Lord's favor:--

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"Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
     Have all gained new sweetness to me;" and
"His presence disperses all gloom,
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     And makes all within me rejoice;" and
"While I am so happy in him,
     December's as pleasant as May."
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King David was longing for the joy and gladness which he had experienced in times past, and figuratively he likens himself to one whose bones had been broken. He knew that his joy and comfort would return if he could but have back again the Lord's favor. He knew, too, that the Lord could not look upon sin with any allowance, hence his prayer: "Hide thy face from my sins and blot out mine iniquities [unrighteousness]. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence and take

not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation: and uphold me with thy free Spirit."

No true Christian can read these words without feeling a deep sympathy with the different expressions; and even though as New Creatures in Christ Jesus we have had no experience with such terrible sins as those which weighed upon the heart of David, nevertheless our higher responsibilities and higher conceptions of sin under the "new commandment" and under the instructions of the holy Spirit, as sons of God, cause us to feel with proportionate weight transgressions which in the sight of the world would appear nothing--such, for instance, as we have just mentioned: covetousness, hatred, slander, which are thefts and murders from the higher standpoint of the divine view appropriate to the New Creation.

In `verse 13` the prophet proposes to the Lord that his discomfiture in divine disfavor was used for the instruction of others,--to show transgressors the Lord's ways and to turn sinners from the evil of their course. How appropriate this thought to us! Not until we know experimentally through faith in the blood of Christ that our sins have been put out of the Father's

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sight, not until we have experienced the joys of his salvation and forgiveness, are we in any condition to be servants to the truth or illustrations to others. Hence we see that it is only those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit who are anointed to preach the gospel. To others the Lord says, "What hast thou to do to take my word into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee?"--refusing to submit to the divine requirements.

The `14th verse` repeats the same thought in a different form. If the Lord will

deliver him from his **guilt** in connection with his sin, his tongue shall thereafter sing loudly the Lord's righteousness--not David's righteousness. This is the song that all the blood-washed may sing, "True and righteous are all thy ways, Lord God Almighty. Thou hast redeemed us from amongst men." None of us have any right to sing our own righteousness, for as the Apostle declares, "There is none righteous, no, not one." The mission of the cleansed ones is to accept and use the Lord's mercy towards them, to extol his righteousness, to acknowledge their unworthiness and to call upon others to recognize this fountain of righteousness and forgiveness.

"O Lord, open thou my lips: and my mouth shall show forth thy praise." This expression implies that none need expect to have a proper opening of their mouths to show forth the Lord's praises, and give the call from darkness into his marvelous light, unless the Lord shall first have opened their lips with his mercy and truth; for otherwise how could any expect to tell the glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people? This equally implies that all who have had forgiveness of sins should be in a condition of spirit to make a full consecration of their all to the Lord, and then all such should expect an unsealing of their lips, that the message of God's truth and grace may flow out from them for the instruction and blessing of others--as it is written, "Grace is poured upon thy lips." "Thou hast put a new song in my mouth, even the loving-kindness of our God." While these are appropriate specially to our dear Redeemer, they are appropriate also to every member of "the Church which is his **body,"** and all claiming to be of "the body," who have never had their lips unsealed to confess the Lord to the extent of their opportunity, have reason to question everything pertaining to their relationship to the Lord.

In `verses 16 and 17` the King shows that he had acquired a deep insight into the meaning of some of the typical sacrifices;--though probably, by inspiration, he wrote more wisely than he understood. As we have seen in our study of

Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices, only the Day of Atonement sacrifices were sin offerings, the burnt offerings and peace offerings of the remainder of the year representing the consecration to the Lord and his service. Grasping this thought prophetically, to whatever extent he also grasped it intellectually, King David expressed his realization that the Lord is pleased rather with a broken and contrite condition of heart than with burnt offerings, which were but types. So, too, we learn that nothing that we can give the Lord, even after our acceptance in Christ, has any value in his sight until first of all we have given him ourselves,--our hearts, our wills.

Let us ever keep in memory that a broken and contrite heart the Lord never despises, will never spurn. Therefore into whatever difficulty any of the Lord's people of the New Creation may stumble, if they find themselves hungering for the Lord's fellowship and forgiveness, if they find their hearts contrite and broken, let them not despair, but remember that God has made a provision through the merit of Christ which enables him to accept and justify freely from all sin all that come unto him through Jesus--through faith in his blood. There is a sin unto death--a sin unto the Second Death--from which there will be no recovery, no resurrection; but those who have broken and contrite hearts on account of their sins may know that they have not committed "the sin unto death," for their condition of heart proves this, as the Apostle declares: "It is impossible to renew again unto **repentance"** any who have committed the sin unto death--wilful sinners against full light and knowledge. Let all, therefore, rejoice in the grace of our God, who is able through Christ, his accepted way, to save unto the uttermost all who come to him, laying aside sin and its desires.

"Now, if any man [of the Church stumble into] sin [through weakness and temptation--not intentionally] we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (`1 John 2:1`.) Such, therefore, may come with faith to the throne of the heavenly grace that they may obtain mercy and find grace to

help in every (future) time of need. (`Heb. 4:16`.) But, like David, their prayers and hopes should be for a restoration of divine favor and not for escape from chastisements needful to their correction. God forgave David, but also chastened him.--`2 Sam. 12:11-14`.

Surely King David must have learned a great lesson in **mercy** from this sad experience. How many times must he have called to mind his response to Nathan's parable, "The man that hath done this thing **is worthy of death:** and he shall restore the lamb four fold, because he did this thing and because he had no pity!" Alas, poor David! these words showed that he had a mind, a heart, that was no stranger to justice and pity in other men's affairs, and hence that he was the more guilty in his much more serious violations of justice and compassion. "Blessed is he that is not condemned in that which he alloweth,"--who is not condemned by his own declarations in respect to the affairs of others. Oh, how merciful to the failings of others it should make us when we remember our dear Redeemer's words, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses"; and when again we remember that we may not even pray for forgiveness of our sins unless we from the heart forgive those who have injured us and again desire our fellowship.

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